

Dance Traditions - DANC 211/4 - Winter 2006

Philip Szporer

Monday 3-6 P.M.

Office Hours: by appointment

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Course text: There is one text for this course, *Moving History/Dancing Cultures (A Dance History Reader)*, edited by Ann Dills & Ann Cooper Albright (Middletown, Connecticut: Wesleyan University Press, 2001) – available in the university bookstore. Periodically, a short article may supplement the course text, if relevant. Please feel free to bring in exceptionally-good articles, books, video clips, sound bytes that you have found so that we can share your intellectual discoveries.

Modernism, Post-Modernism and Beyond

Lecture 1 (Jan 9)

Birth of Modern Dance: Duncan, Delsarte, Fuller, Allen, St. Denis, Shawn, Laban, Wigman, Jooss

Lecture 2 (Jan 16)

Library Tour -3:00 P.M. Orientation Room, Vanier Library, w/ librarian Susie Breier. Room VL-122 (compulsory)

Screening of videos: 'Denishawn' and 'Shawn and The Men Dancers', after the orientation, in the library.

Lecture 3 (Jan 23)

Graham, Horst, Humphrey, Hawkins, Limon, Holm

Guest: Mariko Tanabe, noted dancer/choreographer and former member of the Erick Hawkins troupe, to speak to the class.

Compulsory reading:

- Marcia Siegel. "The Harsh and Splendid Heroines of Martha Graham", in *Moving History/Dancing Cultures*. Middletown. Connecticut: Wesleyan University Press, 2001, pp. 307-314.

Assignment: (4 points)

Write a précis of the compulsory reading (due Jan 23).

Lecture 4 (Jan 30)

Dunham, Primus, Ailey, Mitchell, Fagan

Compulsory Reading:

- Brenda Dixon Gottschild. "Stripping the Emperor: The Africanist Presence in American Concert Dance", in *Moving History/Dancing Cultures*. Middletown. Connecticut: Wesleyan University Press, 2001, pp. 332-341.

Assignment: (4 points)

Write a précis of the compulsory reading (due Jan 30).

Lecture 5 (Feb 6)

Cunningham, Taylor, Nikolais, Robbins

Lecture 6 (Feb 13)

Post-Modernism in the US

Perspectives and concerns of the Judson Church to Contact Improvisation (Merce Cunningham, Yvonne Rainer, Trisha Brown, Lucinda Childs, Laura Dean, Twyla Tharp, Steve Paxton, Nancy Stark Smith, Simone Forti, Elizabeth Streb, Meredith Monk, etc...), and the emergence of forms and connections in Canada (Toronto Dance Theatre, EDAM, Catpoto).

Compulsory reading:

- Peter Ryan, "10000 Jams Later: Contact Improvisation in Canada, 1974-95", in *Moving History/Dancing Cultures*. Middletown. Connecticut: Wesleyan University Press, 2001, pp. 414-420.

Assignment: (4 points)

Write a précis of the compulsory reading (due Feb 13).

STUDY WEEK: Feb. 20 – no lecture

Lecture 7 (Feb 27)

Parallel Universe: Quebec Dancing into the 21st Century

Consideration of the social, political and cultural shifts in Quebec, with emphasis on Groupe de la Place Royale to Nouvelle Aire, the major figures (Édouard Lock, Ginette Laurin, Paul-André Fortier, Marie Chouinard, Jean-

Pierre-Perreault), the rise of the independents, and how certain kinds of dance move from the margins to the mainstream.

Suggested Reading:

- Iro Tembeck, "The Flowering of the Independents", in *Dancing in Montreal*. Madison, WI.: Studies in Dance History, The Journal of the Society of Dance History Scholars, pg 79-98.

Lecture 8 (Mar 6)

I. Post-Modern Strategies Beyond North America

The emergence of Tanztheatre in Germany (Susanne Linke, Reinhild Hoffman, Pina Bausch), William Forsythe, African contemporary dance forms, the traditional vs. contemporary dialectic in Asian dance.

Compulsory Reading:

- Ananya Chatterjea, "Chandralekha: Negotiating the Female Body and Movement in Cultural/Political Significance", in *Moving History/Dancing Cultures*. Middletown. Connecticut: Wesleyan University Press, 2001, pp. 389-397.

Assignment: (4 points)

Write a précis of the compulsory reading (due Mar 6).

Lecture 9 (Mar 13)

II. Post-Modern Strategies Beyond North America

Butoh (Japan)

Lecture 10 (Mar 20)

The Africanist presence in Contemporary American Performance:

Willa Jo Zollar, Bill T. Jones, Ralph Lemon, Rennie Harris, Ron Brown, Bebe Miller, Savion Glover.

Lecture 11 (Mar 27)

Critical Perspectives

Dance writing and ethics, incorporating a debate of the required reading.

Compulsory Reading:

- "Discussing the Undiscussible", Arlene Croce, *The New Yorker*, 1995 (handout to students)

Assignment: (4 points)

Write 2 questions addressing issues brought out in the article (due Mar 27).

Lecture 12 (Apr 3)

Bodies and Sexualities

Gender in Contemporary Dance, including Dance and Masculinity (from Ted Shawn and His Men Dancers to Michael Clark, Mark Morris, Paxton) and Ambiguous Physicalities (Streb/Ringside, Louise Lecavalier).

Final essay due – 1st date to submit

Lecture 13 (Apr 10)

Dance on Film and Video

Dance technologies and experimentation, from Norman McLaren, Maya Deren, Merce Cunningham/Charles Atlas, William Forsythe, Lloyd Newson, to the Hollywood musical, and dance for television - Dance in America (PBS), Rhombus Media, the BBC, MTV and Bravo!FACT.

Final essay due – absolute deadline. No late submissions after this date.

GRADING:

The course will attempt to train students in basic research skills, the importance of historical context, the use and documentation of primary and secondary sources, the critical interpretation of texts, and the implications of methodological approaches.

Assignments & Exams:

1 - quiz (2) - 40%

Two short answer in-class exams based on class lectures, discussion, readings, media examples, and discussions.

2 - précis of required reading or writing of relevant questions (5 in total – each assignment 4 points) - 20%

Grading of the précis is based on clarity of expression, understanding of material, and to elucidate the relevance, significance, and essential meaning of the articles/chapters. Typed, doubled-spaced (reasonable font size).

3- final essay - 30% Due: Apr 3 or absolute final date April 10

"Dancing out the Difference" is the focus for the essay. Choose an individual or a group of individuals and put into context the impact of their work. Consider the social, cultural and the aesthetic shift realized through their efforts. The essay may be written in French or English. All papers (5 pages) must be typed, double-spaced, (with a reasonable font size), paginated, and include your name, a title, as well as proper citations/references, bibliography, filmography, videography, etc. . . .

No papers accepted after this date.

Grades are based on clarity of expression, observational, descriptive, and analytic skills, research methods, references, footnotes and bibliography.

4- attendance - 10%

Attendance will be recorded at the beginning of every class. Students will be expected to participate actively in class discussions, unless you have a justified absence (please see the Teacher and Student Handbook for a definition of what is justified). If you miss one class, your participation mark will automatically decrease 5%, two absences 10%.

Summary of Criteria of Evaluation:

1. Pop Quiz (2): 40%
2. Precis and Questions related to Compulsory Readings: 20%.
4. Final Essay (due Mar 27 or absolute final date Apr 3, 2006): 30%
5. Attendance: 10%

To receive the best grade, your writing must be error-free and well structured. Plagiarized work will result in a failed grade.

LATE WORK WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED. If you have a valid reason for postponing assignment submissions, such as a death in the family or a serious illness, please contact me (or Hilary, the Department Assistant), and we'll arrange a reasonable alternative. Otherwise, half a grade will be deducted for each day the paper is late.